

Walking, Hiking, and Snowshoeing

Policy

Walking, hiking, and snowshoeing access are allowed with restrictions within Quabbin Park, Quabbin Reservation, and Off-Reservation lands. Access is prohibited in restricted areas including but not limited to: Reservoir (frozen), ponds (frozen), Prescott Peninsula, posted areas near Winsor Dam, and reservoir islands (Table below).

Walkers, hikers, and snowshoers are warned that Off-Reservation properties may be open for hunting and are advised to take adequate precautions to avoid conflict with hunting.

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds¹</i>
Walking/Hiking/Snowshoeing	□ ²	□ ²	□	⊘	⊘	□

□ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

Discussion

Walking, day hiking, and snowshoeing access are allowed in designated areas during designated times to protect sensitive areas. Access on existing paved, gravel, and woods roads, as well as maintained trails is encouraged to protect water quality and benefit public safety if search and rescue efforts are initiated. Access on the frozen reservoir is strictly prohibited. In addition, the Division has installed a system of accessible portable toilets strategically sited, actively monitored, and maintained to address human sanitary waste concerns posed by this passive recreational activity. This 1998 policy has not changed, but implemented watershed protection measures have been increased.

Please contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for more information about universally accessible trails at (413) 323-7221.

¹ South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

² Walking, hiking, and snowshoeing are allowed within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed system, except in restricted areas (e.g., Reservoir and ponds, Prescott Peninsula, posted Administration Areas, and Reservoir islands).






Cross-country Skiing

Policy

Cross-country skiing is allowed within the over 10,000 acres of Off-Reservation lands (**Map 6**) according to general restrictions. Cross-country skiing is strictly prohibited on the reservoir's frozen surface, in Quabbin Park, and in Quabbin Reservation.

Watershed Protection Regulations 350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)(14) state: The use of bicycles, skis and other means of non-motorized transportation within the Watershed System shall be permitted only in areas designated by DCR or its designee."

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds¹</i>
Cross-Country Skiing			<input type="checkbox"/>			

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

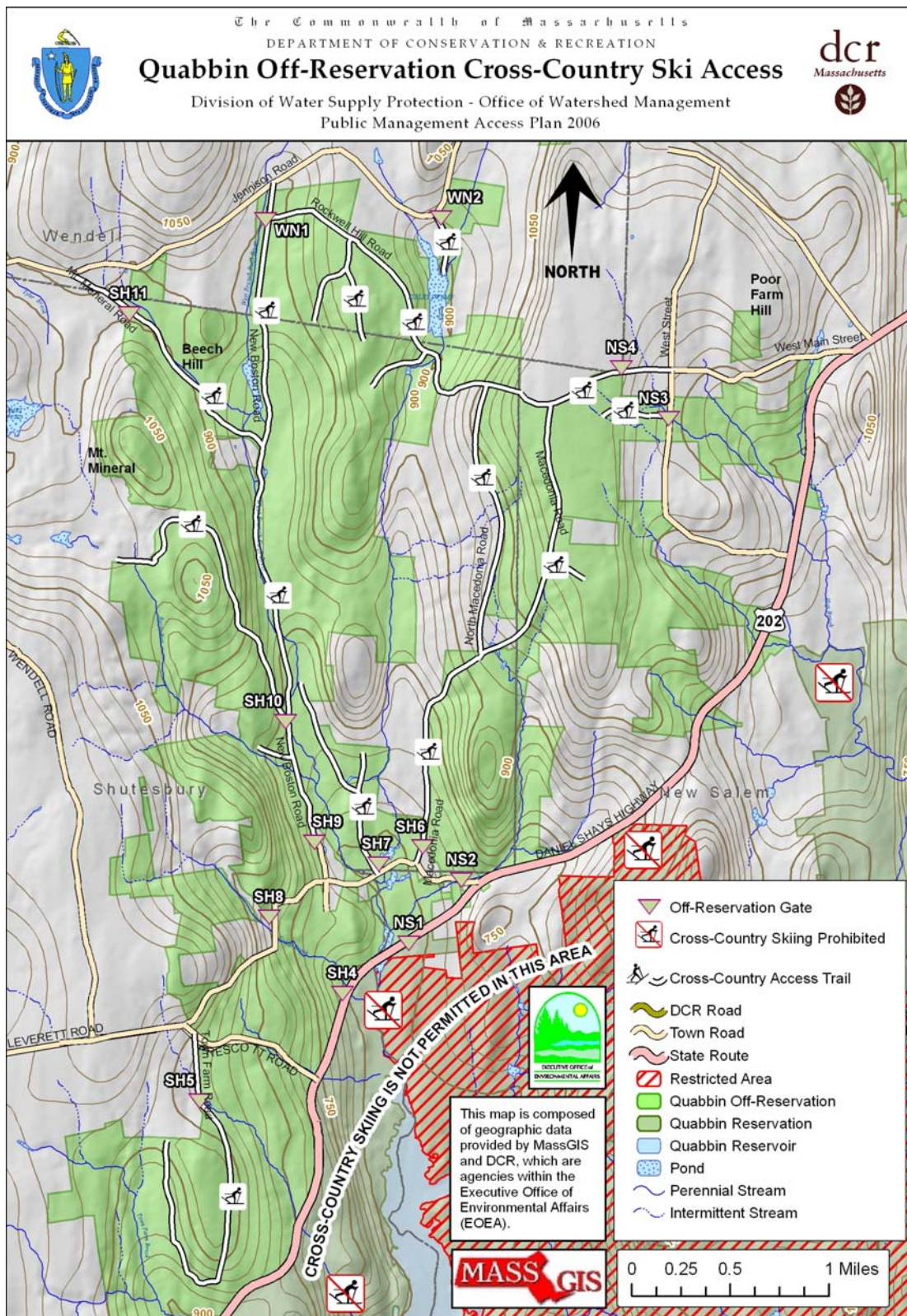
Discussion

Cross-country skiing typically has a longer duration than other winter activities. The probability is thus higher for improper disposal of human fecal waste. Associated impacts with this activity include erosion and chemicals left in parking areas, behavior such as littering or vandalism. These impacts may introduce sediments, chemicals, and pathogens to the water supply system. Thus, cross-country skiing is allowed in designated areas during designated times to protect water quality and public safety. Access on the frozen reservoir is strictly prohibited. This 1998 policy has not changed.

Please contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for more information about accessible trails (413) 323-7221.

¹ South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

Map 6 DCR Designated Cross-Country Skiing - Off-Reservation



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Hunting or Trapping

Policy

Hunting and trapping activities are prohibited within Quabbin Park, Quabbin Reservation, and Quabbin Reservoir and ponds, with exceptions made for watershed management activities including the Controlled Deer Management Program and the State Paraplegic hunt. Hunting within Off-Reservation lands is allowed according to the general restrictions and State Hunting regulations.

Watershed Protection Regulations 350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)(2) state: “No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by DCR or its designee.”

Summary

Activity	Quabbin Park	Quabbin Reservation	Off-Reservation	Quabbin Reservoir	Regulating Ponds	Off-Watershed Ponds ¹
Hunting/Trapping						

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

Discussion

Hunting and trapping on public lands in Massachusetts is a complex issue. Historically, recreational hunting and trapping activities within the Quabbin Reservoir Area had been prohibited by MGL Chapter 737 (Kelly-Wetmore Act). However, after extensive research, the DCR (formerly MDC) determined that a limited and controlled deer hunt was necessary for watershed protection of the forest resources in general and natural regeneration, in particular. The Act was amended in the Acts of 1990 Ch. 436. Accordingly, the DCR has developed the Controlled Deer Management Program with an affiliated Universal Access Hunt program. This program is highly structured for water quality protection. Overall, the control of animal population may benefit water quality by reducing contamination by fecal material and pathogens.

Please contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for more information about the Controlled Deer Management Program and Off-Reservation hunting access permits (413) 323-7221. This policy has not changed.

¹ South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

² Hunting and Trapping are prohibited except by special permit during the Quabbin Controlled Deer Hunt and associated Universal Access Hunt. Contact the Quabbin Visitor Center for more information.





Ice Fishing or Ice Skating

Policy

Traditional ice fishing (e.g., fishing through holes in the ice with tip ups, jigging rods, or handlines) and ice skating is allowed during the MA fishing season with general restrictions and other applicable regulations within Off-Reservation ponds and Off-Watershed ponds. Ice fishing or ice skating is prohibited within Quabbin Park, Quabbin Reservation, or on the frozen Reservoir and regulating ponds.

Watershed Protection Regulations 350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)(5) state: “Fishing from the shoreline of the Quabbin Reservoir and its Tributaries within the Watershed System or from boats shall be allowed only during a season designated by DCR or its designee.” No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by DCR or its designee.”

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds¹</i>
Ice Fishing/ Ice Skating			<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/> ²

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

Discussion

Traditional ice fishing or ice skating activities are allowed on Off-Reservation lands and Off-watershed ponds. Overall, these activities have little impact, but their associated activities can affect water quality: parking impacts, improper disposal of human fecal waste, behavior issues such as littering or vandalism. Traditional ice fishing has been an historical use and is considered relatively safe on these designated ponds which have shallow depths and relatively stable level. This policy has been clarified to better describe traditional ice-fishing practices and the definition of off-watershed ponds.

¹ South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

² Ice fishing, ice skating, and carry-in boat access allowed on three off-watershed ponds: Peppers Mill, South Spectacle, and Bassett, only. Please call Watershed Rangers, if accessing, as a courtesy @ 413-323-0192.

Shore Fishing


Policy

Shore fishing on existing trails is allowed along the Quabbin Reservoir in designated areas (**Map 8**) according to specific restrictions. Shore fishing is permitted between Gates 22-44 and 8-16 by foot during the designated Quabbin Fishing Season. Shore fishing is prohibited in Quabbin Park and all restricted areas including but not limited to Prescott Peninsula, reservoir islands, and baffle dams.

Shore fishing along Off-Watershed ponds is allowed according to specific restrictions and all other applicable regulations.

Watershed Protection Regulations 350 CMR 11.09(2)(a)(5) state: “Fishing from the shoreline of the Quabbin Reservoir and its Tributaries within the Watershed System or from boats shall be allowed only during a season designated by DCR or its designee.” No Person may hunt, shoot or trap animals on or within any Watershed System property except at times and in areas designated by DCR or its designee.”

Summary

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Quabbin Park</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservation</i>	<i>Off-Reservation</i>	<i>Quabbin Reservoir</i>	<i>Regulating Ponds</i>	<i>Off-Watershed Ponds¹</i>
Shore Fishing		<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ³	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ²	<input type="checkbox"/> ³

☐ General Restrictions: General public access within the Quabbin Reservoir Watershed System is restricted to one hour before sunrise and one hour after sunset through gates or designated (posted) areas only. Any activity which injures or defaces the property of the Commonwealth is strictly prohibited.

Discussion

Fishing from shore poses a water quality problem when unplanned paths are created by shore fishermen, if exotic bait becomes invasive, with the improper disposal of human fecal matter, and behavior such as littering. These associated activities may introduce sediment, chemicals, and pathogens to the water. Therefore, shorefishing is limited to shoreline areas between Gates 8-16 and Gates 22-44.

¹ South Spectacle Pond, Bassett Pond, and Peppers Mill Pond are off-watershed ponds.

² No fishing in the Park except catch-and-release fly fishing (allowed all year) below the Winsor Dam in the Swift River, unless posted.

³ Shore fishing within off-reservation lands and off-watershed ponds is allowed year round according to State Fishing regulations.

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & RECREATION

Quabbin Boat & Shore Fishing Access

Division of Water Supply Protection - Office of Watershed Management
Public Management Access Plan 2006

Legend

- Gate: Day Access Only
- Gate: Night Access*
- Boats Prohibited From Area
- Fishing Area (Boat Launch)
- Quabbin Reservation
- Boat Fishing Limit
- Shoreline Fishing
- Road
- Access Trail
- Restricted Area
- Quabbin Watershed

Depth Below 530 Elevation

- 0 to -29
- 30 to -59
- 60 to -89
- 90 to -119
- 120 to -150

***DCR Authorization Permit Required**

OFF-WATERSHED POND: Bassett, North Spectacle & South Spectacle Ponds

OFF-WATERSHED POND: Peppers Mill Pond

This map is composed of geographic data provided by MassGIS and DCR, which are agencies within the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA).

MASS GIS

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